

**LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORT
MUSSELSHELL/GOLDEN VALLEY COUNTIES
MEETING DATE – MONDAY, DECEMBER 4TH, 2017
BUSY BEE CAFÉ-NOON**

Chairwoman, LaVonne Rook called the meeting to order. There were 7 members and guests present. The minutes were approved in a motion from Barbara Mettler and seconded by Steve Moore.

Updates from Members Present:

Steve Woodard with LIFTT (Living Independently for Today & Tomorrow) presented a lot of information to the group. LIFTT is a nonprofit independent living center serving 18 counties in Southeastern MT. LIFTT provides advocacy and resource services to people of all ages and all disabilities. Steve talked about several different services that are provided and customized to the needs of each individual that they serve. **1) Information & Referral** – they help obtain information and/or make a referral regarding community services, benefits, housing, caregiver services and transportation options. **2) Individual & Systems Advocacy** – with this service, they assist individuals to become their own best advocate to understand their individual civil rights and responsibilities as well as promoting and modeling these to others. **3) Skills Training** – this service provides individual or group training to enhance personal growth and life skills to promote independence. This training may include: daily living, budgeting, benefits application and acquisition of transportation. **4) Peer Mentoring** – this service provides one-on-one support by a person who has experienced a disability that may be able to help someone with a similar experience or challenge. **5) Transition Services** – with this service they assist youth with disabilities to transition as independently as possible into adulthood. It can also be assisting individuals to move out of institutional care into a less restrictive environment that meets his/her needs. **6) Personal Assistance Services** – The Medicaid Community First Choice Self Directed Personal Assistance Services (CFC-SDPAS) Program is designed for individuals who wish to manage their own services by developing a long-term supportive care program in a home setting. Another very important service that LIFTT offers is they work with an individual and a contractor to complete home modifications so that the individual can remain in their own home without it becoming a safety hazard. Once again LIFTT is offering several different workshops and classes that are designed to give the individual more knowledge to strengthen the skills they already have for living and working well on a daily basis. At this time all of these classes are offered in Billings but if we could get enough interest (at least 6 people), LIFTT would come to Roundup and offer these classes locally. LIFTT is a wonderful service, so if anyone knows of someone that can benefit from their services, please contact LIFTT at 406-259-5181 or 800-669-6319. Steve can be reached directly at 406-294-5185 or by his email address at steve@lifft.org. There are a number of resource options that may be available to cover the cost of LIFTT services. Some of these include grant funders, fee for service structure, state and federal assistance programs and other resources. Steve mentioned that they welcomed a new Executive Director. Her name is Jen Cleland and she is an awesome addition to LIFTT. LIFTT also has a newsletter that they try to publish quarterly, but another excellent source for information about events and important advocacy issues is their Facebook page - **LIFTTMT**. If anyone would like to be put on the mailing list you can contact Steve directly or LIFTT at the number listed above. Thank you Steve for all that you do!

Susie Goffena with Area II Agency on Aging was present. Susie said that they have not heard yet from the State what the Provider cuts for 2018 will be, but they did receive word that their other programs will see cuts of 2.99% across the board. Their office is keeping very busy and she said that they have an opening and are looking to hire a Nurse/Case Manager for the Roundup Office.

Catherine Grams, MS, LAC, LCPC for the Roundup Mental Health Center said that the Roundup Office is keeping very busy and that she has approximately 50 open clients on her case load. This number includes both CD and MH Clients. Right now we are still enrolling new clients but not opening them to services until after the first of the year because we do not have any openings on our schedule until after the 1st of January.

At the last LAC Meeting in October, Nicole Borner, Musselshell County Commissioner asked if Cindy could put together some numbers on referrals, OPA recap and the Blue Bird Sr. Service Transportation. **Cindy McCaffree, Secretary/Support Staff for the Roundup MHC Satellite Office** gave an update on the number of clients that our office helps apply for services with the OPA Office in Roundup and where our referrals come from that we get. The list was put together the first part of October 2017 and was for the previous months (so numbers have changed/increased since then) and these numbers are only our active clients, it does not include clients that started but are now closed to services. **Clients that I helped apply for Medicaid – 25; VA Referrals – 8; Clinic Referrals – 15; Probation Referrals – 7; Court Referrals – 11; Rimrock Foundation Referrals – 1; Attorney Referrals – 1; DFS Referrals – 6; Jail Referrals – 3; Prime For Life (DUI) Referrals – 8; Watch Program Referrals - 2; Inpatient Referrals – 1; Workers Compensation – 1; Youth Court – 1 and Self/Family Referrals – 23.** We probably had another 15 referrals from different sources that the clients did not follow through with services. I also talked with Paulette with the OPA Office and she gave me a recap from her office standpoint. The OPA Offices have a PAHL (Public Assistance Hotline) for the whole State of MT. This hotline receives between 400 and 500 calls on a daily basis. They are supposed to have approximately 80 staff members' state wide to cover these calls but that is not always the case. Paulette did say that once the calls reach a certain number during the day that they shut down the system so that no more calls can come in for that day. It is not uncommon for a person or provider to have to wait on hold for up to a couple of hours. On an average when Paulette is on the PAHL all day, she might complete 8 to 10 cases for that day. Her time consists of helping people apply for assistance, helping with recertification, answering questions and researching what the problem might be and why they don't have coverage. So as everyone can see, Musselshell County really needs the OPA Office in Roundup to remain open. It will be devastating to our clients and the community if the State shuts down the Roundup OPA Office. **Transportation with the Blue Bird Sr. Service/Council on Aging Recap – Brenda Vescovi, Director** gave me the schedule and costs to use the bus. Round trip to Billings is \$35.00 and if they have Medicaid Travel then the Council is reimbursed the Medicaid Travel Rate and the client does not owe anything out of pocket. If a client needs the bus locally then the rate is \$4.00 roundtrip. The bus schedule is Monday – Friday.

Barb Mettler, Executive Director for the Mental Health Center gave an update on the financial status of the MHC. She said that as of right now (but things could change if any more funding cuts are passed down) that MHC as a whole is operating in the black. Earlier in the year, there were cuts made to the Case Management Department that has helped alleviate a lot of the funding issues. We are all hopeful that no more cuts with staff will have to be made. The Satellite Offices are probably where the board will start looking to make cuts next if needed. Barb stated that that the ESAA Board was able to fund

several trainings for the upcoming year – including Trauma Informed Care Training. QPR Training and Mental Health 1st Aide Training.

Steve Moore is a resident of Roundup and is very concerned about what is going to happen when all of these cuts and closures start taking place. Where will these people go to get the help that they so desperately need. Steve also asked the question whether our law enforcement in Musselshell County is CIT (Crisis Intervention Training) trained. No one had a real definite answer for this. Barb Mettler stated that she thought that this training has been combined into a 1 or 2 day training session instead of the initial week long training that it has been in the past. That has been the biggest obstacle for a lot of the smaller law enforcement departments because they don't have the staff available to cover when so many deputies are absent for that length of time to attend these week long trainings. Steve said that he might stop by the Sheriff's Office and try and get some information about this.

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be held on Monday, February 5th, 2017 at Noon at the Busy Bee. Even though our group was smaller than usual, there was a lot of great discussion. Thanks again everyone for coming and hoping everyone can make the February 5th Meeting. Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!

Thank You & Happy Holidays!
Cindy McCaffree, Secretary